Information Technology Strategy and Benefits
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The Railroad Retirement Board is actively pursuing further automation and modernization of its various claims processing systems. Ongoing and planned projects will further increase and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our benefit payments and program administration. Automation initiatives in recent years have also significantly improved operations and allowed the agency to reduce staffing in certain areas.

Key initiatives are grouped into major categories as described below.

Technology Infrastructure and Administrative Support -- These investments are required to establish a firm foundation for the technology advances we have planned in accordance with the agency's target enterprise architecture, and to maintain our operational readiness. The specific investments in fiscal year 2009 include:

- *Network Operations* ($950,000)
  This item supports the agency's centralized wide-area network operations. It includes funding for emergency/mandatory replacements or upgrades of hardware or software as needed to ensure continuing service to the user community and the agency's customers. This item will also provide for assistance in the form of staff augmentation and other contractual support to provide for the introduction of new technologies, and the purchase of system monitoring tools to improve efficiency.

- *Infrastructure replacement* ($50,000)
  This item provides funding for the continued upgrading and scheduled replacement of the agency's network equipment and related software. The upgrades and replacements follow the RRB's IT Replacement Policy for modernizing and securing the agency's computer operations.

- *IT Tools* ($100,000)
  The RRB will purchase a variety of software and systems development tools to continue automation efforts that exploit new information technology and support the transition to automation. Funding is also needed to comply with Federal requirements concerning the need to record and archive electronic transmission of information in the future.

Risk Management Services -- Information Security ($375,000)
In order to provide appropriate protection of information and information systems in the face of a changing risk environment, a comprehensive security program requires continuous management to control the risks that threaten the agency's critical assets. Complementary use of both technology and well-trained personnel can effectively reduce those risks to an acceptable level. Funding for information security will provide for a variety of information security program activities.

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Application Design Services
Application design services enable the agency to provide for the strategic objective of providing our customers with more flexible delivery options.

- *E-Government* ($200,000)
  We continue to enhance the Employer Reporting System (ERS). We are using contractor assistance to convert existing software to a language that can be supported by in-house staff; completing work on processes that handle pre-payment and post-payment verification of unemployment and sickness insurance claims; and adding the functionality to allow employers to create and file annual reports of service and compensation via the Internet-based ERS. These are scheduled to be completed in fiscal year 2009.

  In fiscal year 2009, ERS will also be expanded to include functionality to notify rail employers of annuities awarded to their employees and to provide notice of Tier I tax liability on sickness payments.

System Modernization – Building on the DB2 Data Optimization project, the next step in our information technology transition strategy is system modernization. The data optimization process and strategic planning will point out opportunities to modernize our systems, many of which are old and complex and require a large investment in maintenance.

- *System Modernization* ($300,000)
  In fiscal year 2009, we will use contractor services to assist us in evaluating, choosing and creating a project plan for our first system to modernize. The selected system will serve as a pilot for future modernization efforts. Key to this examination will be the requirement to use optimized data so that data redundancy is reduced to the lowest practical level.

Task Orders ($395,000)
This non-capital item represents funding to implement the President's goals for increasing private-sector competition in commercial-type activities. Contractor resources would be used on a task-order basis (1) as an alternative to filling vacant positions, and (2) for staff augmentation for system and network engineering and application development projects.

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Technology Infrastructure and Administrative Support

Capital Element: **Network Operations**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$950,000**

The agency strives to provide one of the best computing environments in the Federal Government. This capital item supports the agency's centralized wide-area network operations. The RRB's computer network links together headquarters and field office computer systems. Services such as electronic mail and the Web are supported through network operations.

Funds are included for emergency replacements or upgrades of hardware or software to ensure continuing service to the agency and its customers.

This item also provides for:
- Assistance in the form of contractual support;
- Support to provide for the introduction of new, emerging technologies; and,
- Purchase of system monitoring tools to further mechanize the monitoring of the network so that we can do more with less staff.

Cyclical replacement of hardware is included in the capital element, Infrastructure Replacement.

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Technology Infrastructure and Administrative Support

Capital Element: **Infrastructure Replacement**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$50,000**

IT infrastructure is the critical foundation for business applications. Life cycle replacement of infrastructure equipment is a direct cost but reduces indirect, hidden costs such as lost end-user productivity and downtime. This capital element provides for the continued upgrading and scheduled replacement of the agency's network equipment and its attendant software. Upgrades and cyclical replacements follow the RRB's IT Replacement Policy for modernizing and securing the agency's computer operations.

Core information technology infrastructure elements identified in the IT Replacement Policy include:

• Imaging jukeboxes	• Personal printers
• Laptops	• Portable printers
• Monitors	• Routers/switches
• Personal digital assistants (PDA's)	• Scanners (imaging)
• Personal computers	• Scanners (personal)
• Network printers	• Servers

The level of funding provided for this activity in fiscal year 2009 will only allow for the replacement of limited equipment restricted to emergency/critical situations.

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Technology Infrastructure and Administrative Support

Capital Element: **IT Tools**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$100,000**

Automation is a key aspect of the agency's long-range plans. Implementation of the target information technology architecture that was defined in the agency's Enterprise Architecture Strategic Plan involves the need to provide new software tools. The RRB will purchase a variety of software and systems development tools to continue automation efforts that exploit new information technology and support the transition to automation. This will include tools to support middleware, relational databases, and the development of additional microcomputer application systems, as well as tools to allow secure Intranet/Internet access to enterprise mainframe-based applications and data. It will also include additional developer licenses for a variety of multi-platform system development tools and server support components.

Funding is also needed to comply with Federal requirements concerning the need to record and archive electronic transmission of information in the future. A fully developed Electronic Records Management (ERM) system consists of the ERM Application, hardware, staff, policies, and procedures that work in concert to enable RRB to manage records electronically. This ERM Application project includes the ERM software and developmental effort that will identify, classify, and dispose of RRB electronic records according to specified records disposition policies.

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Risk Management Services

Capital Element: **Information Security**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$375,000**

In order to provide appropriate protection of information and information systems in the face of a changing risk environment, a comprehensive security program requires continuous management to control the risks that threaten the agency's critical assets. Complementary use of both technology and well-trained personnel can effectively reduce those risks to an acceptable level.

Funding for information security will provide for a variety of information security program activities. These include initiatives to:

- Continue certification and accreditation of agency systems.
- Acquire security awareness training. The agency will take advantage of shared service center agencies/vendors participating in the Presidential Information Systems Security Line of Business initiative.
- Acquire role-based comprehensive specialized security training for personnel with direct responsibilities for protecting IT systems.
- Acquire a Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Reporting Solution to automate FISMA evaluation and reporting processes. The agency will take advantage of shared service center agencies/vendors participating in the Presidential Information Systems Security Line of Business initiative.
- Replace equipment in accordance with life-cycle standards.
- Acquire a digital evidence forensic workstation and automated malicious code analysis software/tools.
- Continue efforts to improve other processes to incorporate security program principles into all aspects of IT system operations.

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Application Design Services

Capital Element: **E-Government**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$200,000**

The President's Management Agenda calls for expanded use of the Internet for services to citizens. We plan to use contractor services to augment existing agency staff to expand the electronic services available to the railroad public via the RRB's website. This goal is consistent with the agency's overall goal to address our customers' needs and expectations, providing them with a range of choices for conducting business with us, including more Internet options that are private and secure. The benefits of these initiatives will be realized in increased efficiency and accuracy of business transactions between rail employees/employers and the RRB.

We will expand the Internet-based Employer Reporting System to:

- Enable rail employers to create and file annual reports of service and compensation,
- Notify rail employers of annuities awarded to their employees, and
- Notify rail employers of Tier I tax liability on sickness payments.

In addition, contractors will be used to assist us in converting the existing system to a Microsoft.Net, platform-based system which can then be supported by agency in-house personnel, and is in alignment with the agency's enterprise architecture.

System Modernization

Capital Element: **System Modernization**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$300,000**

This item provides funding for contractor services to evaluate the pilot project's business requirements. The contractor will identify possible solutions, analyze them and then recommend one for implementation. Key to this examination will be the requirement to use optimized data so that data redundancy is reduced to the lowest practical level. To save development costs, the contractor will also investigate incorporating any of the pilot project's processes into already existing RRB applications. Additionally, the contractor will explore the possibility of locating the pilot on a non-mainframe-based computer platform.

Moving away from mainframe technologies will help the RRB recruit development staff with more modern skill sets to replace its retiring workforce. Development of the pilot will begin during fiscal year 2009. RRB and contractor staff will perform the work.

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Non-Capital Element: **IT Task Orders**

Fiscal Year 2009 Cost: **$395,000**

This non-capital item represents funding to implement the President's goals for increasing private-sector competition in commercial-type activities. Contractor resources would be used on a task-order basis (1) as an alternative to filling vacant positions, and (2) for staff augmentation for system and network engineering and application development projects.

It is anticipated that task orders in fiscal year 2009 would be used to accelerate the development of automation initiatives and eliminate the RRB's aging dBase programs. Task orders would also be used for assistance in handling the follow-up activities related to the database management system migration and data optimization projects.

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